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THE EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION TRAINING ON CLOSED MINDEDNESS, ANXIETY, AND SELF CONCEPT. PAPER PRESENTED AT THE NATIONAL SEMINAR ON ADULT EDUCATION RESEARCH (CHICAGO, FEBRUARY 11-13, 1968).

BY- IMBLER, IRENE

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SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION, TO TRAIN MEMBERS TO WORK AS A LEARNING TEAM, WAS USED TO INVESTIGATE CHANGES IN CLOSED MINDEDNESS, ANXIETY, AND SELF CONCEPT. SEVENTEEN MALE LABOR UNION MEMBERS ENROLLED IN A TWELVE WEEK RESIDENT LABOR EDUCATION PROGRAM AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY, WERE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED TO A EXPERIMENTAL GROUP WHICH ATTENDED A TWELVE WEEK, TWO HOUR SESSION TRAINING COURSE, AND TO A CONTROL GROUP WHICH ATTENDED REGULAR CLASSES IN THE LABOR PROGRAM. A THIRD CONTROL GROUP RECEIVED NO TREATMENT. THE ROKEACH DOGMATISM SCALE, TAYLOR MANIFEST ANXIETY SCALE, AND BUTLER-HAIGH Q SORT WERE ADMINISTERED TO ALL GROUPS BEFORE AND AFTER THE PROGRAM. RESULTS INDICATED THAT (1) NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES EXISTED IN THE CHARACTERISTICS AFTER THE TREATMENT PERIOD, (2) CHANGE IN THE PREDICTED DIRECTION OCCURRED IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN ALL CHARACTERISTICS AND IN ANXIETY IN THE FIRST CONTROL GROUP, (3) NO SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE CORRELATION EXISTED BETWEEN CLOSED MINDEDNESS AND ANXIETY, AND (4) A NEGATIVE CORRELATION DID EXIST BETWEEN CLOSED MINDEDNESS AND ANXIETY AND A POSITIVE SELF CONCEPT. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE NATIONAL SEMINAR ON ADULT EDUCATION RESEARCH, CHICAGO, FEBRUARY 11-13, 1968. (PT)

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THE EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION TRAINING ON CLOSED-MINDEDNESS, ANXIETY, AND SELF-CONCEPT

-BY-

IRENE IMBLER *

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Research has indicated a positive relationship between closed-mindedness and (a) inhibited learning, (b) ineffective problem-solving, and (c) unsatisfactory interpersonal relations. Other studies show that small groups possess potential for influencing change in member attitudes, especially if the group, under authoritative guidance, encourages a permissive and secure atmosphere.

This investigation was concerned with changes in closed-mindedness, anxiety, and self-concept as a result of taking part in a program of Participation Training, a small-group discussion technique designed to train members to work together effectively as a learning team.

The hypotheses predicted that Participation Training would significantly reduce closed-mindedness and anxiety and improve self-concept in the experimental subjects; and that there would be a significant positive correlation between closed-mindedness and anxiety, and a significant negative correlation between closed-mindedness and a positive self-concept, and between anxiety and a positive self-concept.

Seventeen adult male labor union members enrolled in the 1966 twelve-week Resident Labor Education Program at Indiana University were randomly assigned to an Experimental Group (N=9) and a Control Group I (N=8). A Control Group II (N=8) was randomly selected from men who had applied for the Program but had not been selected. The Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale, and the pencil and paper form of the Butler-Haigh Q Sort were administered to all 25 subjects before and after the Program.

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*Assistant Professor, Adult Education, New York State College of Home Economics, Cornell University.

The Experimental Group attended 14 two-hour sessions of Participation Training and the Resident Labor Education classes. Control Group I attended only Resident Labor Education classes. Control Group II received no treatment.

Data were analyzed by analysis of corvariance, Fisher's t-test for correlated measures, and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Method. The results indicated: (1) no significant difference in closed-mindedness, anxiety, or self-concept among the three groups after the treatment period; (2) that change in the predicted direction occurred in the Experimental Group in anxiety ($p. .05$), and in closed-mindedness and self-concept ($p. .10$), and in Control Group I in anxiety ($p. .05$); (3) no significant positive correlation between closed-mindedness and anxiety ($r= + .22$); (4) a significant negative correlation between closed-mindedness and a positive self-concept ($p. .05$); (5) a significant negative correlation between anxiety and a positive self-concept ($p. .005$).

Conclusions

Inferences have been drawn only for the participants in this study. The following conclusions are written with this in mind:

1. Some modification of the format of Participation Training in terms of length of training or frequency of sessions is necessary before it can be clearly determined whether this treatment will produce in the participants significant increase in open-mindedness, reduction in anxiety, or improvement in self-concept.

2. The relationship between anxiety and closed-mindedness remains in doubt. The findings of many previous studies have indicated a significant positive relationship between anxiety and closed-mindedness. The findings of some other studies have failed to yield such results.

3. The more closed-minded the person, the less positive his self-concept is likely to be. This conclusion is corroborated by the findings of numerous previous studies.

4. The higher the person's level of manifest anxiety, the less positive his self-concept is likely to be. This conclusion is also corroborated by the findings of many previous studies.

TABLES

TABLE 1. COMPARISON AMONG HIGH AND LOW DOGMATIC GROUPS ON DOGMATISM

Group	High Dogmatic Mean	Low Dogmatic Mean
Michigan State U.	157.2	101.1
Union Members	130.8	114.5

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